



British Embassy
Paris

Ambassade de Grande-Bretagne
35 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré
75383 Paris Cedex 08
Tel: 44 51 32 02
Fax: 44 51 34 85

From The Ambassador

09 May 1996

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STATE VISIT OF PRESIDENT CHIRAC, 14-17 MAY

1. Two points to be aware of in the run-up to next week's visit.

PSG 1 Rapid Vienna 0

2. Paris St-Germain is the Parisian football club. Yesterday's victory in the final of the European Cup Winners' Cup was their first ever in Europe and only the second European club trophy won by a French side. Chirac is a committed PSG fan. As mayor of Paris he attended their home matches frequently. PSG's victory is the talk of France. Chirac will receive the team at the Elysee today.

3. I can think of two options for action in the light of this:

(a) a brief, rapid message from the Prime Minister to Chirac, to congratulate him on the victory and to look forward to their meeting next week; or

(b) a minimum option - the Prime Minister might mention the victory in conversation with Chirac when they first meet next week, and, if possible, refer to it when proposing the toast at Hampton Court.

Madame Bernadette Chirac

4. Madame Chirac will celebrate her (63rd) birthday on 18 May, the day after the State visit ends. I mention this since Her Majesty the Queen will bid farewell to Madame Chirac the day before her birthday and Mrs Major will see a lot of Madame Chirac next week.